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NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Forests

SUNSHINE COAST TIMBER SUPPLY ANALYSIS RELEASED

VICTORIA – A new timber supply analysis report of the Sunshine Coast timber supply area indicates the annual harvest level could be maintained at its current rate and perhaps even increased, B.C. chief forester Larry Pedersen announced today.

"This analysis report isn't an allowable annual cut determination," said Pedersen. "It's technical information I will consider when setting a new allowable annual cut later this year."

The current allowable annual cut for the Sunshine Coast timber supply area is 1.14 million cubic metres, set in 1996. The new report presents two analyses, one that indicates the annual harvest level could remain at 1.14 million cubic metres per year, and another that projects a potential harvest level of 1.233 million cubic metres per year. Both harvest levels could be maintained for 250 years and include a deciduous (red alder) harvest level of 95,000 cubic metres per year.

A public review period begins today with the release of the Sunshine Coast analysis report and the public discussion paper. This allows the public to comment on the Sunshine Coast timber supply review before the chief forester determines a new allowable annual cut later this year. Public input will be accepted until Aug. 13.

"I will consider comments from the public review along with the analysis report when I set the new allowable annual cut," said Pedersen.

The Sunshine Coast timber supply area covers about 1.56 million hectares in the south coast. It includes Powell River, Sechelt, Gibsons and Lund, as well as communities located on Texada, Cortes and Lasqueti islands.

Since the last timber supply analysis, changes in forest management policy for the Sunshine Coast timber supply area have been put in place, including the Forest Practices Code. The code sets out standards designed to maintain a range of environmental values like biodiversity, old-growth forest and habitat for at-risk wildlife.

These changes have been offset by an increase in estimated timber volumes as a result of new information and changes to how scenic areas are managed. Social and economic implications of possible changes to the harvest level for the area are also considered in the timber supply analysis.

The timber supply analysis report is also summarized in a public discussion paper. Both documents are available at the Ministry of Forests Web site at http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/tsb and at the following Forest Service offices:

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- Sunshine Coast forest district, 604-485-0700
- Sunshine Coast forest district-Sechelt field office, 604-740-5005
- Vancouver forest region, 250-751-7001

A timber supply review is undertaken independently by the chief forester for each timber supply area every five years. The review provides an up-to-date assessment of timber supply in each of B.C.'s 37 timber supply areas and 34 tree farm licences, based on the best available information and current management practices.

For more information on the timber supply review, visit our Web site at http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/tsb on the Internet.

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Editors: This release is online at http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/pscripts/pab/newsrel/mofnewstitles.asp

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